

## Public Hearing Comments

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To: HearingComments, DNREC (MailBox Resources)

<DNRECHearingComments@delaware.gov>;mpeterschmidt@bioenergydevco.com

<mpeterschmidt@bioenergydevco.com>

 1 attachments (2 MB)

Final DNREC - CE-min.pdf;

Comments on Docket #2022-P-MULTI-0012: Bioenergy Innovation Center

Name: Monica Peterschmidt

Phone: 3015295618

Email Address: mpeterschmidt@bioenergydevco.com

Organization: Bioenergy Devco

Comments:



Bioenergy Innovation Center

**SEAFORD  
DELAWARE**

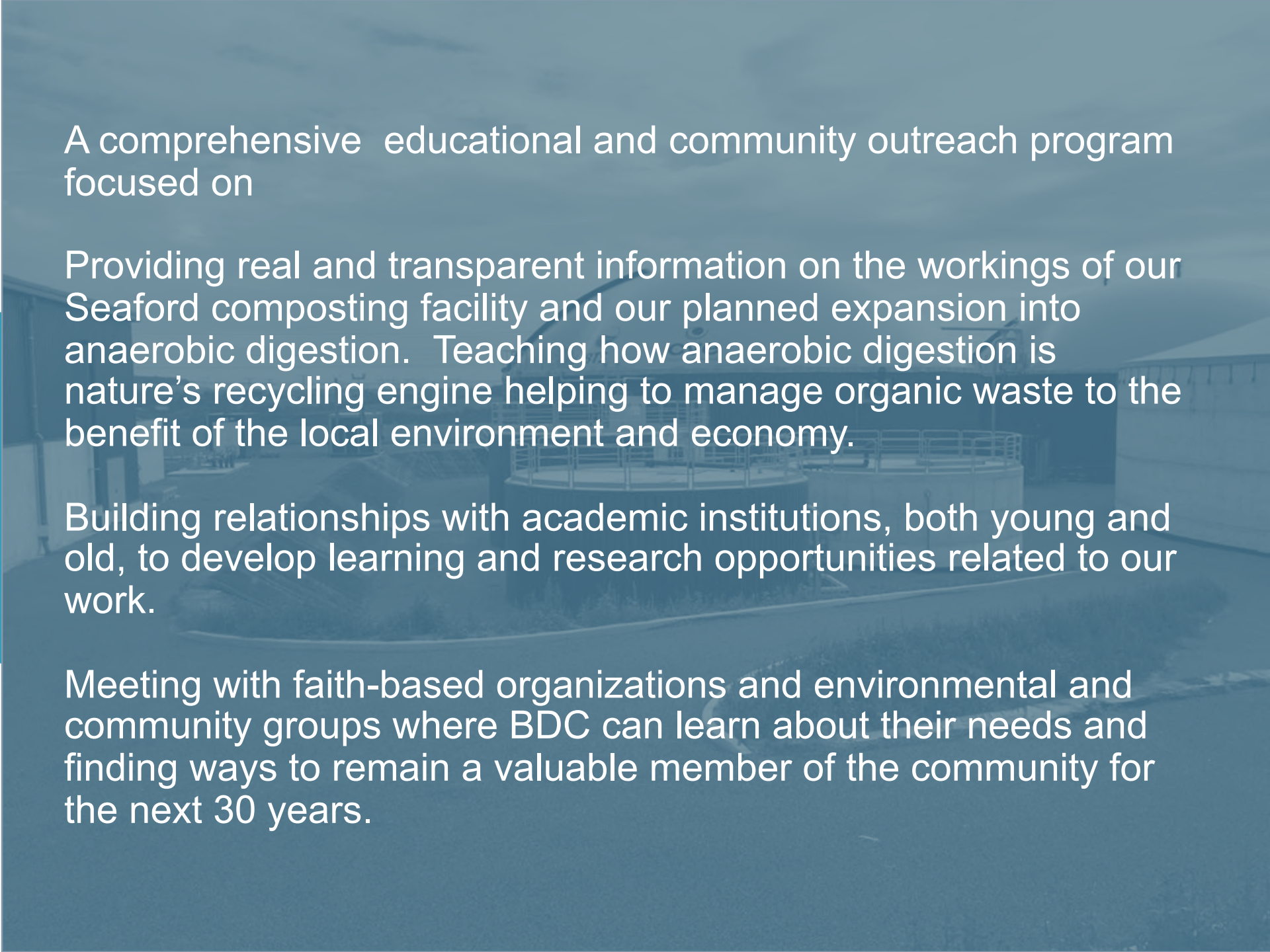


**BIOENERGY  
INNOVATION  
CENTER**



# Bioenergy Devco in the Community





A comprehensive educational and community outreach program focused on

Providing real and transparent information on the workings of our Seaford composting facility and our planned expansion into anaerobic digestion. Teaching how anaerobic digestion is nature's recycling engine helping to manage organic waste to the benefit of the local environment and economy.

Building relationships with academic institutions, both young and old, to develop learning and research opportunities related to our work.

Meeting with faith-based organizations and environmental and community groups where BDC can learn about their needs and finding ways to remain a valuable member of the community for the next 30 years.

## Yearly Program Attributes

Quarterly Open House Tours focused on our commitment to the agricultural community and sustainable practices relating to compost, and anaerobic digestion is available for questions on the process.

Academic sponsorships such as the Future Farmers of America or the University of Delaware, where the site becomes a living laboratory.

Local commitment and advocacy around the key issues of importance to the community in the areas of clean water, clean air, and healthy soils.

Supporting local organizations such as the Master Gardeners, Seaford Historical Society, and the DE Food Bank.



# 2021



## Discovery Day Open House

First in person event on site. General education for the community. Created a virtual presentation as well. [DISCOVERY DAY | BIC \(bioenergyic.com\)](https://www.bioenergyic.com)



## Compost and Mother's Day

Nanticoke Watershed Alliance & Master Gardeners also attended. We educated attendees about home composting, gave away composters and composting information (donated to us by a DE DSW program). Kids planted flowers to take home to Mom.



## Halloween

Master Gardeners & Nanticoke Watershed Alliance attended. Staff created Truck & Treat stations. Kids decorated pumpkins, local farm stand donated a pumpkin for a raffle. Shared information on the BICs current composting as well as on our planned expansion which we shared.

# 2022 Spring

International Compost Awareness Week and Mother's Day planting event. Promoted on Social, direct mail in Spanish/English to the local area, mailings to Boys & Girls Clubs. Master Gardeners, DE Botanical Gardens & Seaford HS FFA Club participated. We received a donation of 25 native saplings to give away in addition to the flowers that the kids planted in their root pouch planters and the veggie plants the FAA Club gave away for donations.





# 2022 Fall

We celebrated Fall with a Pumpkin Decorating Event. The Master Gardeners, Nanticoke Watershed Alliance & Seaford HS FFA Club participated. We had several Trunk or Treat stations along with our Pumpkin Decorating activity. We had several multigenerational groups of families attend. We donated our extra pumpkins to the Boys & Girls Club for an activity with the Master Gardeners as well as to Manor House Retirement Home in Seaford.







# In- Person Tours



# Expanding community reach



**Waste Connection & Compost Firm, Set**

**Blades Fire Department**

**USDA**

**Leanna First Aria**

**Perdue Sustainability**

**Salisbury University Students**

**Lead MD, Salisbury University**

**The Guardian**

**Senator Carper (D-DE)**

**Delmarva Chicken Assoc Enviro Comm**

**Delaware Nature Society & Friends**

**Wicomico County Council & Planning Depts**

**Media Tour: Delmarva Now, Delaware Independent**

**Seaford HS FAA Club**





# Educational Engagement

# Working together onsite and in the classroom

Working with the club adviser, Matt Cohee, the students are doing multiple projects on our site. Students are building and installing Bat Houses (for insect control) and Wood Duck Houses. They are designing native plant-based landscaping for one of our buildings. More projects are in the works as we grow this relationship.

Seaford HS FFA

Presentation to the Sussex Tech Students on AD

Presented Anaerobic Digestion101 to both in person and virtual classrooms.

Tour for Salisbury University Sustainability Classes

Four classes of students along with their individual Professors from SU came for tours as part of a class in the Environmental Department.

We are currently in discussions with Dr. Peter May on piloting a Algel Turf Scrubber for our storm pond.

University of Maryland

University of Delaware

Ongoing collaboration with Dr. Gordon Johnson on a long-term study of our compost, recently completed. Dr. Johnson is currently developing further studies with his department. With Dr. Johnson's 2023 retirement, we are also working with Emmalea Ernest to continue the studies.







# Outreach

# Environmental Groups Outreach

Compost  
Research &  
Education  
Foundation

US Compost  
Association

Nanticoke  
Watershed  
Alliance

Wicomico  
Environmental  
Trust

Center for Inland  
Bays

Chesapeake Bay  
Foundation

Chesapeake Bay  
Trust

Nanticoke River  
Keepers

Delaware Nature  
Society

Delmarva Land &  
Litter Collaborative

Assateague Land  
Trust

Sussex County  
Master Gardeners

New Castle  
Presbytery

Delaware Sierra  
Club

Food & Water  
Watch

As soon as BDC took over the facility from Perdue Agrirecycle in 2020, we began not only our local outreach to the community, but also to the local and regional environmental groups.

There were some groups, that despite repeated invitations via phone call, email and on social media, did not respond.



# Partnerships: UD & Sussex County Master Gardeners

We have a long-term partnership with the University of Delaware and Master Gardeners as we collaborate with their community garden projects and local garden clubs.

The Master Gardeners participate in many of our community events. We participate in their open house event at the Demonstration Garden which we donate a truck load of compost to each year.

Each October we hold a compost donation event for Community Gardens from Lewes DE to Salisbury MD. In 2022 we donated over 89 tons of compost at no cost to:

- Grace United Methodist Church (Meditation Garden)
- United Unitarian Church (Meadow Development)
- Spade & Trowel (public plantings in Seaford)
- Western Sussex Boys & Girls Club (Community Garden)
- Boundless Community Garden
- Coastal Club Community Garden
- Delaware Botanical Garden



# Outreach to the local community

Consistent outreach to the local community is important to us. Social media platforms have enabled us to organically reach community members with updated information and images. In addition, we have joined the following local business groups:

Western Sussex Chamber of Commerce  
Sussex County Chamber of Commerce  
Delmarva Chicken Association  
US Composting Association

- We have sent bilingual mailers (informational and invitational) to target immediate neighbors, Posted invitations on social media across all platforms.
- Introductory mailer with an offer to tour the site (early 2021)  
Invitations for the Mother's Day event (2021, 2022) and Halloween (2021, 2022)
- Invitation to DNREC hearing
- We were interviewed on the Spanish Language Station Maxima 95.3.
- ~ We held one meeting with the leadership of the local Haitian church and Ephphatha Medical Care Services and offered invitations to the Open Houses, a private tour, or additional conversations.
- ~ Reached out to the adjacent mobile home community Sussex Manor with invitations to discuss our project.





# Summary

When BDC opens a facility, we aren't just concrete and iron or methane and digestate. We are responsible, involved members of the community. We offer well-paid jobs with full benefits. We care about clean water, clean air, and healthy soils. It's why we do what we do.

We can't do it without our communities' involvement and support. Reaching our communities where they are, hearing their concerns, teaching them about what we do, and learning how we can support them are vital to our work. We are dedicated to reducing climate change through the smart management of organic waste.

We can support a healthy poultry industry and our local farmers while protecting our air, water, and soils as we work together with our community.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this presentation.



For any additional information, please contact

Monica Peterschmidt  
Director Community Engagement  
[mpeterschmidt@bioenergydevco.com](mailto:mpeterschmidt@bioenergydevco.com)

